

## House Republican Press Release

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### **Town Hall Meetings Across State Aimed at Combating Underage Drinking**



HARTFORD- With underage drinking becoming an increasing problem both statewide and nationwide, and Connecticut youths beginning to drink alcohol as early as age 11, far earlier than the national average, over thirty Connecticut towns will join thousands across the United States in holding Town Hall Meetings to discuss and raise awareness on the issue of underage drinking.

State Representative David Scribner (R-Brookfield), who was chosen by Governor Rell to lead a team of state agency officials to a national planning meeting on the subject of underage drinking in Washington, D.C. last November, has been assisting in coordinating Connecticut's participation in the national forum.

"Underage drinking is one of the most critical issues facing the children of this state and their development and health right now," said Representative Scribner. "We are trying to spread awareness to parents and children, and take direct action to combat this growing variety of substance abuse in younger children."

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), children who begin drinking alcohol before age 15 are five times more likely to develop alcohol problems as adults than those who start after age 21. National research also shows that a higher percentage of youth aged 12-to-20 use alcohol than tobacco or illicit drugs, making underage drinking a leading public health problem in the United States. In response, the U.S. Surgeon General has declared a first-ever "Call to Action" on this issue.